

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing amendments to the specification prior to further examination. No new matter has been introduced. Acceptance is respectfully requested.

In their application as originally filed, Applicants' teach a method of providing a data store of people information. According to this method, unstructured information about individual people is automatically extracted from a global computer network and stored in a database. The database includes for each person a record holding at least the name of the person and the name of the person's current employer. People named in the database are given access to their records such that they may view and edit their data. Thus, the database is maintained and continually updated by the people named in the database and by the automated means for extracting unstructured information from the global computer network and storing the unstructured information in the database. The people having access to the database, however, may not modify the automatically extracted and stored unstructured information (see Specification, page 16, lines 22-28). In this way, the integrity of the automatically extracted and stored unstructured information is maintained.

Claims 1 and 5-7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stuntebeck et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,065,016) ("Stuntebeck") in view of Brady et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,463,430) ("Brady").

The Stuntebeck patent describes a universal directory service which "provides the communication addresses of individuals associated with numerous different institutions" (col. 1, lines 6-7). The universal directory service can be accessed via different communications channels such as the internet, dial-up access, dedicated access, wireless access, voice access, and commercial on-line services (see Fig. 1). The universal directory service extracts people information by communicating with other servers such as (1) local directory servers, (2) on-line directory servers, (3) local database servers, and (4) white pages directory servers (see col. 2, lines 9-23). Users of the universal directory service may log on to the service and update their directory information (see col. 3, lines 52-55). Thus, when a user updates her directory information in the directory service server, the old directory information extracted from the various other servers is not maintained.

The Brady patent describes a method for automatically creating or updating a database of resumes and related documents. According to this method, a spider or web crawler retrieves relevant documents to example documents from a network and extracts information from the retrieved relevant documents and stores the extracted information in a database (see col. 8, lines 22-46). Brady does not describe maintaining the integrity of the extracted information when a user updates his respective information.

In contrast to the Stuntebeck and Brady patents, the present invention provides a method step for maintaining the integrity of automatically extracted information in the database. In other words, the automatically extracted and stored information remains unchanged in the database even after the user edits her data and in her database record. Since neither Stuntebeck nor Brady teach, suggest or otherwise make obvious the limitations of now amended claim 1 ("wherein said enabling access includes maintaining integrity of the automatically extracted and stored information"), Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Since neither Stuntebeck nor Brady teach, suggest or otherwise make obvious the limitations of now amended independent claim 1, dependent claims 6-7 are allowable for the same reasons. The withdrawal of the rejections of dependent claims 6-7 is respectfully requested. Claim 5 is now cancelled.

Claims 2, 8, 15, 16, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stuntebeck in view of Brady, and further in view of Robertson (U.S. Pat. No. 6,269,369).

As argued above, neither Stuntebeck nor Brady teach, suggest or otherwise make obvious the limitations of now amended independent claim 1. Robertson does not add to Stuntebeck or Brady the maintaining of integrity of automatically extracted stored data recited in Claim 1 as now amended. Dependent claims 2 and 8 are allowable for the same reasons. The withdrawal of the rejections of dependent claims 2 and 8 is respectfully requested.

Robertson provides a network-computer-based personal contact manager system. Users maintain and update their user information which is stored in a database on a networked server. Users may specify which of their contacts are permitted to access certain data of their user information. The system issues notifications (e.g., by e-mail) to the user's contacts when the user changes his information or when a preset event defined by the user occurs. For example, a User A may enter an address change (see Fig. 14). If User B is a contact of User A, then the personal contact manager issues an update notification to User B's computer and User A's address change

is downloaded to User B's computer (see col. 16, lines 2-7). Software on User B's computer is then updated with the changed information.

Robertson does not provide for monitoring unstructured information about people and organizations extracted from a global computer network and notifying a third party of detected changes in the extracted information. According to Robertson, a user makes changes to the user's information (see Abstract; Fig. 14; col. 3, lines 12-21; col. 4, lines 42-45; col. 6, lines 48-54; col. 11, lines 50-58; and col. 16, lines 1-7). Thus, the change in the user's information does not result from extracting and storing unstructured information about people and organizations.

In addition, Stuntebeck, Brady, and Robertson do not suggest that they be combined in any way to provide for the monitoring of unstructured information about people and organizations extracted from a global computer network and the notifying of a third party of detected changes in the extracted information. Both Stuntebeck and Brady provide the directory-type services of extracting and storing information about people and allowing users to access that information (e.g., to update user information or search for information). The directory-type services provided by Stuntebeck and Brady are very different from the personal contact managing services provided by Robertson. Robertson allows users to share their personal information, in part or in whole, with other specified users (see, e.g., col. 2, lines 47-50). For example, when a user changes her information, the personal contact manager notifies other specified users of those changes. Therefore, it would not have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to combine in any way the teachings of Stuntebeck, Brady, and Robertson to provide for the monitoring of unstructured information about people and organizations extracted from a global computer network and the notifying of a third party of detected changes in the extracted information. Because a prima facie case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) has not been established, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent Claim 15 be withdrawn.

Since claims 16 and 19 depend from base claim 15, they are allowable for the same reasons. The withdrawal of the rejections of dependent claims 16 and 19 is respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 4, 9, 12, and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stuntebeck in view of Brady, and further in view of Polnerow et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,813,006).

As argued above, neither Stuntebeck nor Brady teach, suggest or otherwise make obvious the limitations of now amended independent claim 1. Robertson does not add the maintaining of integrity of automatically extracted and stored data as recited in Claim 1 as now amended. Dependent claims 3-4 are allowable for the same reasons. The withdrawal of the rejections of dependent claims 3-4 is respectfully requested.

Independent Claim 9 has been amended to include similar limitations as now amended independent Claim 1 ("enabling individuals to annotate, including updating, information stored in the database in a manner that maintains integrity of the information as extracted"). Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 9 be withdrawn for at least the same reasons.

Claim 12 is now cancelled.

Since claim 14 depends from now amended base claim 9, claim 14 is allowable for the same reasons. The withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claim 14 is respectfully requested.

Claims 10 and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stuntebeck in view of Brady and Polnerow, and further in view of Robertson.

Since claims 10 and 13 depend from now amended base claim 9, they are allowable for the same reasons given above with respect to Claim 9. The withdrawal of the rejections of dependent claims 10 and 13 is respectfully requested.

Claims 11 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stuntebeck in view of Brady, Polnerow, and Robertson, and further in view of Celik (U.S. Pat. No. 6,654,768). Celik does not add the maintaining of integrity lacking in Stuntebeck, Brady, Polnerow or Robertson discussed above.

Since claim 11 depends from now amended base claim 9, claim 11 is allowable for the same reasons. The withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claim 11 is respectfully requested.

Claims 17-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stuntebeck in view of Brady and Robertson, and further in view of Polnerow.


Since claims 17-18 depend from base claim 15, they are allowable for the same reasons argued above with respect to Claim 15. The withdrawal of the rejections of dependent claims 17-18 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

HAMILTON, BROOK, SMITH & REYNOLDS, P.C.

By 
Mary Lou Wakimura
Registration No. 31,804
Telephone: (978) 341-0036
Facsimile: (978) 341-0136

Concord, MA 01742-9133
Dated: March 3, 2005